

Leading on Social Inclusion in the Australian Public Service

Michelle Patterson

Social Inclusion Unit

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

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Today's presentation comprises three elements:

Leadership in progressing the Social Inclusion Agenda

What is Social Inclusion?

What can managers in the APS expect?



Advancing the social inclusion agenda will require coordination across portfolios, and policy partnerships between the public, private and third sectors

“Promoting social inclusion requires a new way of governing. Australia must rethink how policy and programs across portfolios and levels of government can work together to combat economic and social disadvantage.”

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd

Inaugural meeting of the Australian Social Inclusion Board

May 2008

The Government has identified 6 early priorities for the national social inclusion agenda:

addressing the incidence and needs of **jobless families with children**

delivering effective support to **children at greatest risk of long term disadvantage**

focusing on particular locations, neighbourhoods and communities to ensure programs and services are getting to the right places

addressing the incidence of **homelessness**

employment for people living with a **disability or mental illness**

closing the gap for Indigenous Australians

The context and drivers for social inclusion have changed

December 2007

- To assist the small but significant number of Australians who had not benefited from the long cycle of economic prosperity
- To maximise productivity and participation in an economy experiencing *labour shortages*
- Identify risks and design policy prevention

November 2008

- Potentially more Australians at risk of, or experiencing joblessness due to global financial crisis

February 2009

- Global economic slowdown
- *Rising unemployment* – lower skilled workers at higher risk
- Potential new locations of disadvantage

Key messages

The Social Inclusion Principles guide individuals, business and community organisations, and government on how to take a socially inclusive approach to their activities. They include three Aspirational Principles:

Reducing disadvantage

- promoting equitable access to universal benefits and more intensive investment for those at risk or experiencing social exclusion

Increasing social, civil & economic participation

- helping everyone get the skills & support the need so they can work & connect with the community **even during hard times** (*a capability approach*)

A greater voice, combined with responsibility

- governments and other organisations giving people a real say in what services they need & people taking responsibility to make the best use of the opportunities

and eight principles of process:

Building on individual and community strengths

- making the most of people’s strengths, including the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and people from other cultures

Building partnerships with key stakeholders

- Governments, organisations and communities working together to get the best results for people in need

Developing tailored services

- services working together in new and flexible ways to be relevant to each person’s different needs

Giving a high priority to early intervention and prevention

- heading off problems by understanding the root causes and intervening early

Building joined-up services and whole of government(s) solutions

- getting different parts and different levels of government to work together in flexibly to get better outcomes and services for people in need

Using evidence and integrated data to inform policy

- finding out what programs & services work well & understanding why, share good ideas, keep making improvements and put effort into the things that work

Using locational approaches

- working in places where there is a concentration of disadvantage, to get to people most in need and to understand how different problems are connected

Planning for sustainability

- Doing things that will help people and communities deal better with problems in the future, as well as manage current problems

There are two key strategies to advance social inclusion:

- universal –

Reviewing & leveraging from universal platforms

&

integration

- Wide engagement with stakeholders and development of social inclusion operating culture and principles;
- Whole of government oversight of social inclusion policy development and reform to ensure targeting of social inclusion priorities (eg will resources be available to the priority locations, does the policy identify how it will improve the circumstances of people with complex and multiple disadvantage);
- engaging COAG in a work program to advance national level engagement; and
- Ongoing research and development

- Targeted and place based –

Developing locally tailored and responsive programs, often with a range of stakeholders, that meet the needs of people experiencing complex and multiple disadvantage - where they live.

- Focussed work and resources for select priority groups and in selected priority areas through a variety of approaches that will be influenced by each specific site but are yet to be determined, could include service integration, partnerships with communities, NGOs, local business, other jurisdictions, brokerage models, hub models etc
- Ongoing evaluation of effectiveness of program dollars both at the level of outcomes on the ground, and costs of bureaucratic support mechanisms
- Transmission of knowledge back into mainstream policy development and into performance frameworks
- Learning from local and international evidence

Key messages

Successful implementation of the social inclusion agenda requires managers in the APS to be aware of three key aspects:

partnerships

- Recognition that addressing entrenched disadvantage will require a commitment to policy coordination between portfolios and a willingness to engage the business and third sectors

early priorities

- An awareness of the Government's interest in the six early priority areas for social inclusion

social inclusion principles

- Application of the Social Inclusion Principles during development of all policy

Your leadership matters